

San Miguel de Lillo

Just 300 steps from the [Santa María del Naranco](#), we find its companion building, the San Miguel de Lillo. King Ramiro I built both in 848 for different purposes: Santa María as a recreational palace, and San Miguel as a church. Together, they make Oviedo's Naranco Hill one of the most important areas for Pre-Romanesque art in Europe.



Unlike the fully intact palace, the church of San Miguel has only partially survived into the present day. In the 12th or 13th century, a landslide caused the collapse of most of the cross-shaped structure, leaving only the western third. That's still enough to impress visitors, though, as well as architectural scholars. Like the Santa María, the San Miguel de Lillo was far ahead of its time.

Architectural highlights of the church's remains include original wall paintings, faded but still visible, depicting a throne and a human form. A gorgeous window at the top, intricately sculpted from a single stone, allows light into the church, illuminating the perfectly preserved door jambs at the entrance. These are carved in the shape of the sovereign and his court. Another unusual feature of the San Miguel is an upper royal balcony, for the king to listen to services.

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